

Technology 101

A Technology Reference Guide for Bankruptcy Attorneys

Welcome to Technology 101, a reference guide for using technology you will encounter as a practicing bankruptcy attorney. This information is designed to answer common questions attorneys encounter when using the court's technology.

Our Website

The court's website can be found at:

<http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov>

Our website contains information you will need as a practicing bankruptcy attorney. You will want to become familiar with the following sections of the court's website:

Reference Library Section

The reference library section contains the following helpful information:

- The Attorney Desk Reference
- Links to the Bankruptcy Code & Federal Rules
- General Orders & Local Rules
- Forms

Judges Section

Each Bankruptcy Judge has their own page with information particular to their court:

- Contact information
- Self-calendaring procedures
- Opinions
- Court Calendar

ECF Section

The ECF section contains the following information:

- Instructions on becoming a registered ECF user
- ECF on-line help
- ECF User Manual
- ECF training class schedules
- Video Tutorials
- ECF on-line credit card payment guide
- Direct links to CM/ECF & PACER
- Creditor/Limited Use filer information

CM/ECF vs. PACER

CM/ECF (Case Management/Electronic Case Filing) is the Northern District of Texas's web-based system you will use to file your documents. In order to get an account and start filing on CM/ECF, you will need to either a) attend a 3.75 hour certification course held at one of our courthouses, or b) already be a CM/ECF registered user in another bankruptcy district. You can find registration information on our website at:

<http://www.txnb.uscourts.gov/ECF/ECF-Register>

The CM/ECF system for the Northern District of Texas can be found at:

<http://ecf.txnb.uscourts.gov>

PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) is a web-based system that allows you to search and view data from our CM/ECF system without a CM/ECF account. This system is intended for persons who need access to court documents (case files, dockets, etc.) but do not need to file documents. To register for a PACER account, go to:

<https://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/psco/cgi-bin/regform.pl>

Keys to Successful CM/ECF Use

- Make sure your documents are in proper PDF format, and are no bigger than 3MB in size.
- Protect your username and password. The system maintains a record of your account activities.
- Navigate CM/ECF filing screens carefully. Don't use the [Back] button when filing. Doing so might duplicate your activity, whether it's filing a document or paying fees.

Technology 101

A Technology Reference Guide for Bankruptcy Attorneys

Courtroom Technology

Each courtroom has technology equipment to assist you with your presentations. Not all courtrooms provide the same equipment. Be sure to check with the Judge's Courtroom Deputy to find out what technology will be available. Courtrooms may have some or all of the following:

Tools Available for Attorneys

Wi-Fi (wireless) access is provided in and around the courtrooms for attorney use. IDs, passwords, and instructions for connecting to Wi-Fi can be found at each attorney table.

A **Document Camera** is available to display paper documents to the entire courtroom. This is helpful when cross-examining witnesses.

Laptop Inputs (via courtroom connection plates) allow you to display your laptop screen to all monitors in the courtroom. Inputs can be found at the attorney tables, podium, and, in some courtrooms, the witness stand. All video inputs use a VGA adapter. Some courtrooms can also share audio through the courtroom's audio system.

DVD/VHS Players are provided to display DVDs and VHS tapes to the entire courtroom. Our DVD/VCR player features high quality slow motion and frame-by-frame capabilities.

Hearing Impaired Headsets are available in each courtroom. These headsets are tied into the courtroom's audio system. Ask the Courtroom Deputy about availability.

Judge Controlled Tools

Courtroom Controls are managed by the Judge or Electronic Court Recorder Operator (ECRO). These controls allow the Judge to move between video sources (different laptops, document camera, etc.) and also control any video or audio conferencing systems.

Audio/Video Conferencing availability is particular to each judge. Judges most often use conferencing when they are traveling between courthouses, or when an out-of-town party has been specifically granted a request to appear via video/audio conference.

Preparing for Court

The following are things that you can do before coming to court to ensure that your presentation goes smoothly:

- Review the Judge's courtroom procedures (found in the Attorney Desk Reference at www.txnb.uscourts.gov).
- Familiarize yourself with and test your technology equipment **AHEAD OF TIME**.
- Contact the Courtroom Deputy to find out what technology is available for use in the Judge's courtroom, and arrange a time to test your equipment.
- If using Wi-Fi, connect before your presentation.
- Before using laptop inputs, be sure to set your screen resolution to 1024 x 768 pixels.
- If you need to share audio, check with the Courtroom Deputy to see if the Judge's courtroom can play audio from the laptop over the sound system. If not, then you will need to provide your own speakers.
- Bring your own cables to connect your laptop to the courtroom connection plates.
- If you are going to provide a proposed order or other document via a flash (USB) drive, please make sure it is cleaned of other files and checked for viruses.
- If all else fails -- reboot!

Courtroom Etiquette

Following these rules will ensure a more "enjoyable" courtroom experience:

Don't Let Your Technology Talk - Be sure to mute all devices (phones, pagers, etc.) and type softly.

Don't Be Late for Your Very Important Date - Pay close attention to your hearing time and return from breaks promptly.

Efficiency is Your Friend - Resolve exhibit objections before the hearing. Know the facts of your case better than the Judge. Don't repeat what the Judge has already read.

Humility is Also Your Friend - Respect the Judge (stand before you speak, refer to the Judge with the proper title, ask permission). Respect opposing counsel, witnesses, and the Judge's staff.